

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 MANILA 04930 290754Z  
ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 HA-05 L-03 H-01 CIAE-00 INR-10  
NSAE-00 /032 W

-----019489 291101Z /13

R 290726Z MAR 78  
FM AMEMBASSY MANILA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3579

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 4930

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: SHUM, RP  
SUBJECT: HUMAN RIGHTS: RAMON ESBERTO, ESTER CENIZA, SYLVIA SALES

REF: A) MANILA 009875, B) MANILA 0793

1. CATHOLIC CHURCH'S TASK FORCE ON DETAINEES (TFD) IN ITS "TFD UPDATE" NOS. 2 AND 4 OF JANUARY 12 AND 24, REPORTED THAT SUBJECTS WERE CONFINED IN "BARTOLINA" PUNISHMENT CELLS AT BICUTAN NOVEMBER 13. ESBERTO AND CENIZA'S PARENTS WERE FORMALLY NOTIFIED OF THEIR ARREST AND WERE ALLOWED TO VISIT THEM AT TCHRISTMAS AND AGAIN ON NEW YEARS DAY. SALES, HOWEVER, WAS REMOVED FROM HER CELL DECEMBER 23 AND HAS NOT BEEN SEEN SINCE. SALES' FAMILY HAS NOT BEEN OFFICIALLY NOTIFIED OF HER ARREST OR WHEREABOUTS, ALTHOUGH HER ARREST NOVEMBER 9 AND 19 WAS REPORTED IN MANILA NEWSPAPERS NOVEMBER 20.

2. FYI: TFD STAFFER TOLD EMBOFF MARCH 9 THAT TFD HAS NOT APPROACHED GOP DIRECTLY ON SALES' CASE BECAUSE TFD KNOWS THAT IS NOT HER REAL NAME. TFD FEARED GOP COULD FLIM-FLAM THEM BY SAYING THEY HAVE NO SYLVIA SALES ON RECORD, THUS FORCING TFD TO REVEAL HER REAL NAME TO GET INFORMATION. HOWEVER, ESBERTO AND CENIZA HAVE RECENTLY BEEN TRANSFERRED TO REGULAR DETENTION QUARTERS WHERE BLOCK-MATES CAN PROTECT THEM AGAINST RETALIATION. THEY HAVE RECENTLY  
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WRITTEN (AT TFD SUGGESTION) A LETTER TO SALES' SISTER NORMA SARMIENTO, STATING THAT SALES' REAL NAME IS EVELNY SARMIENTO AND TELLING HER OF EVELYN'S DISAPPEARANCE. NORMA IS EXPECTED TO GO TO THE MILITARY WITH THAT LETTER SHORTLY TO ASK WHETHER SALES IS INDEED HER SISTER AND TO FIND OUT HER STATUS. NORMA IS PRESENTLY AWAITING THE RETURN FROM A CONFERENCE OF FATHER RALPH SALAZAR, HEAD OF BISHOP'S

CONFERENCE'S NATIONAL SECRETARIAT FOR SOCIAL ACTION (NASSA).  
TO ACCOMPANY HER ON THE CALL ON THE MILITARY. TFD BELIEVES THEY NOW HAVE STRONG CASE TO PRESS FOR INVESTIGATION INTO DISAPPEARANCE, SINCE SALES' ARREST WAS REPORTED PUBLICLY AND MILITARY CAN NOW HARDLY DENY HOLDING HER.

3. EMBASSY WILL REPORT FURTHER AS CASE DEVELOPS.  
NEWSOM

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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
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